



Fairfax County
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Leading Children's Book Author to Speak at Child Care Event

April 19, 2004 -- Rosemary Wells, one of the nation's leading authors and illustrators of children's books, will share her insights on literacy and young children with early childhood educators at a child care provider appreciation event sponsored by the Fairfax County Office for Children on Tuesday, April 27, from 6:30 to 9:00 p.m. at the Fairfax County Government Center (12000 Government Center Parkway, Fairfax, VA 22035).

More than 300 family child care providers, child care center teachers, and center administrators are expected to attend Ms. Wells' presentation. The event also will feature workshops by Fairfax County Public Library staff and recognition of child care professionals who have completed emerging literacy training through the Office for Children's Institute for Early Learning and Emerging Literacy.

Ms. Wells' career as an author and illustrator spans more than 30 years and 60 books. She has won numerous awards, and has given readers such unforgettable characters as Max and Ruby, Noisy Nora, and Yoko.

A passionate proponent of children's literacy, Ms. Wells warns that the "child who lives in a home where people have no time, a bookless world, one where the TV and pop music is always on and shopping is the preoccupation of the family, will likely not find it easy to develop much imagination. This can describe millions of American children's lives in both poverty and great wealth."

OFC's Institute for Early Learning and Emerging Literacy emphasizes literacy and school readiness in its training classes for child care professionals. Funded by the federal Child Care Bureau's Early Learning Opportunities Act and Virginia's Quality Initiative grant, the Institute offers more than 20 courses that focus on emerging literacy and awards a \$250 bonus to students who complete 16 hours of literacy training.

OFC, part of the Fairfax County Department of Family Services, helps County residents find child care, pay for child care, or start family child care businesses through programs such as Child Care Assistance and Referral, School Age Child Care, Head Start, the Home Child Care Permit, the USDA Child Care Food Program, and the Institute for Early Learning.

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